



GARY R. HERBERT
GOVERNOR

STATE OF UTAH

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GREG BELL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

For Immediate Release
May 31, 2011

Contact: Ally Isom
Deputy Chief of Staff
801.538.1503 desk
801.864.7268 cell
aisom@utah.gov

Governor Herbert Urges Citizens to Prepare for Flooding

SALT LAKE CITY – Accompanied by local elected officials, public safety and emergency management personnel, representatives from numerous state agencies, and the media, Governor Gary R. Herbert toured flood sites in Weber County today and held a press conference to urge Utahns to be prepared for flooding.

Generally, Utah's snowpack melts and flows into rivers and streams between May 1 and June 30. Cooler May temperatures and recurrent storm patterns have enhanced the snowpack and compressed Utah's snowmelt cycle essentially into the month of June. Utah's waterways have also become swollen, and the ground is saturated and prone to runoff, due to the wettest spring season on record. Flooding has already occurred in some parts of the state, and seven Utah counties are under flood advisories.

Governor Herbert is warning Utahns to be ready and to understand that local governments are the first line of defense and response for flooding. "This flooding has not sneaked up on us," said the Governor at press conference held at the Weber County Emergency Operations Center. "We can't control Mother Nature, but we can anticipate and mitigate what she sends our way. Contact your local government to access information about local flooding dangers and emergency management plans. Local governments should also be your first stop for supplies like sandbags."

"While flood preparations and response are local issues, *individuals* bear an even more fundamental responsibility to safeguard their loved ones and protect their property," the Governor continued. "Stay clear of fast-moving water and be extra vigilant in keeping children away from water. If your property is in danger of flooding, take steps to prevent property damage. If you wait until the flood waters are at your front door, you will have waited too long."

The Governor also encouraged Utahns to look out for their neighbors, especially those who are elderly or have a reduced capacity to prepare for themselves.

Governor Herbert emphasized that the state stands ready to respond if called upon by local governments. “I have ordered our state Emergency Operations Center to a heightened state of alert,” he said. “We are monitoring the situation around the state on a daily – often hourly – basis and our state agencies are mobilized to provide large-scale assistance should it become necessary.”

The Governor urged Utahns to visit www.bereadyutah.gov for up-to-the-minute information on flooding and for access to available local, state, and federal resources. “That’s not just a nifty name for a website, it should be our preparedness motto: Be Ready, Utah!”

###

The following resources will be available in the “News & Media” section of Governor Herbert’s website: http://www.utah.gov/governor/news_media/index.html

1. “Updated Utah Flood”: Presentation by Brian McInerney, National Weather Service, Salt Lake City Forecast Office
2. Northern Utah Flood Map, created by Utah Division of Emergency Management
3. Southern Utah Flood Map, created by Utah Division of Emergency Management
4. Weber River Flood Map, created by Weber County Emergency Management